Iowa Science Teachers Journal

Volume 5 | Number 4 Article 7

1968

"What Does Membership Mean to the Elementary Teacher?"

Gordon Wagner

vides for authorization and the appropriation of $2½ million in finances to initiate the development.

As proposed, the facility should help make increasing numbers of people aware of the importance of our heritage and prepare them for making intelligent decisions whenever the conservation of resources and our precious heritage are involved. With 41 per cent of today's people being twenty years of age or younger, we must provide the best possible leadership training. People may be likened to an iron bar. It has been said a plain bar of iron is worth $5.00. This same bar, when made into horseshoes, is worth $10.50. If made into needles, it is worth $4,285. If turned into balance wheels for watches, it becomes worth $250,000. This is true of another kind of material . . . YOU. Your value is determined by what you make of yourself. The operation of the Naturama is not to be concerned only with nature and recreation alone, but with the relationship of the recreationist and the resources around him. Man's outdoor manners must be shaped with room for personal pride and dignity.

You have many important decisions to make in years ahead. Let us all hope they will be wise ones. It is hoped your decisions will consider not only technical know-how, but also whether and when.

"WHAT DOES MEMBERSHIP MEAN TO THE ELEMENTARY TEACHER?"

At a recent in-service meeting in our school, an ELEMENTARY TEACHER TOLD ME, "We have specialists in our school system who come into my classroom to teach art, music, and physical education. No one helps me teach science! What chance do I have keeping up with the changes in science when I only have a few credits in the first place?"

AN ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL TOLD ME, "Elementary teachers, as a rule, want to do a good job teaching science But the fact is they are afraid of what they don't know. How can they become aware of what other elementary teachers are doing to promote science in the classroom?"

A SCIENCE DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN RECENTLY SAID, "Frankly, the school encourages teachers to enroll in science classes, but the budget won't allow paying tuition for them. What is a logical solution to the problem? What can our elementary teachers do to keep up with teaching science?"

My suggestion in all three cases was the same: Join a professional organization with a common objective of promoting science education. The elementary teacher, through professional association, can: Learn what other classroom teachers are doing to teach science; communicate with other teachers with similar science backgrounds; recognize a good science program by reading of others; find out what "modern science" programs are successful; become familiar with the latest science equipment; establish goals in teaching science; become

knowledgeable in new materials available from publishing houses; attend conferences and exchange ideas with other educators; hear inspiring speakers; and increase their prestige through membership in the professional science educators' association.

General George Armstrong Custer was killed in the worst military defeat in the history of the United States at the hands of Indians using stone-age weapons. Most of the Indians were using bows and arrows, clubs, and hatchets. There were very few guns of any kind on the winning side of the battle. This battle, won with weapons of the Stone Age, occurred only seventy years before the first atomic bomb explosion. One man's lifetime is about that many years. One hundred years after Custer, in 1976, man will be on the moon. Is your teaching keeping pace with this change?

Twentieth-century teaching is no longer practical. Our students are going to spend a great deal of time in the twenty-first century. They will know firsthand of space flights to the planets, 3-D television, brainwave communications, ocean farming, and computerized teaching. Our teaching now must prepare them to live in the world of tomorrow. One of the ways this can be done is by belonging to the NSTA. The 1967 NSTA Detroit Convention gave elementary teachers the choice of the following meetings to meet their individual needs:

–Educational TV in Science
–The New Science Program (K-12)
–Effective In-service Programs
–Chemistry for Elementary Teachers
–Biology for Elementary Teachers
–Elementary Science
–Theory of Learning in the Elementary Program
–Teaching Techniques for the Elementary Teacher
–Communication–"From Tom-Tom to Telstar"
–Transportation–"Carts, Kayaks, and Capsules"

In this age of specialization, elementary teachers need all the help possible in keeping up with science. By joining the NSRA, elementary teachers will receive *Science and Children* which serves as a general clearinghouse of ideas. You, as the elementary teacher, will come in contact with ideas of what to teach and how to teach it. You will become familiar with other educators and the problems they have solved. You will become involved in science which literally affects every child in your class. You will become truly professional. You will become a science teacher in your elementary classroom!

GORDON WAGNER
Member, NSTA National Membership Committee
Editor, Milwaukee Suburban Science Teachers Association Newsletter

---

A GUIDE TO SCIENCE READING
Hilary J. Deason

This is a comprehensive, annotated guide to more than 900 paper-bound science books in each of fifty-four scientific and mathematical categories with significant essays by H. Bentley Glass, Margaret Mead, and others. The research for this book was undertaken by AAAS.

It also contains a rather complete list of the names and addresses of book publishers. (Signet P2283/60c)